



ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

December 13, 2004

RESERVE AFFAIRS

Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum, USA
Chief, National Guard Bureau
Pentagon, Room 2A514B
Washington, DC 20310-2500

Lieutenant General Blum:

On behalf of the Department of Defense, I offer greetings to the men and women of the Army and Air National Guard for a happy 368th birthday. Since December 13, 1636, the nation has relied upon the faithful and patriotic service of citizen soldiers.

Victory in war demands sacrifices. Wherever sacrifices have been made, the National Guard has been there -- on the bridge at Concord, the green at Lexington, the beach at Normandy, and on the streets of Fallujah.

Guardsmen also provide vital security at home, both as state militia forces and as part of federal military forces. Whether the threat is a natural disaster or a weapon of mass destruction, the National Guard provides exemplary service to the protection of our homeland.

Please pass along to your soldiers and airmen my note of grateful appreciation and thanks for their continued service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "T. F. Hall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "H".

T. F. Hall